Contra Costa County Historical Society

BULLETIN

POST OFFICE BOX 190 APRIL 15, 1972 MARTINEZ, CALIFORNIA

FROM STAGECOACH TO BART

Contra Costa's hurdle of transportation history, from the stagecoach to the cars of BART, will be recounted April 25th in Concord. Above, the Oakland-Lafayette-Walnut Creek-Danville-San Ramon open-air coach stops at Walnut Creek's Rogers Hotel in the early 1900s. Below, a 3-car BART train, soon to be calling at central County cities, pauses for the camera.

The inauguration of BART service to central Contra Costa County, culminating 26 years' study, planning, engineering and building, and a century's history of the area's transportation, will be spotlighted in a

general membership meeting April 25th, in Concord.

Bay Area Rapid Transit's sleek trains are set to roll to Concord, through Orinda, Lafayette, Walnut Creek and Pleasant Hill for the first time late in May. Previewing the service for Society members and recounting the trials and tribulations of constructing the nation's newest high-speed transit system will be BART General Manager B. R. "Bill" Stokes.

Also addressing the meeting will be our own transportation expert, rail historian and Society Vice President Louis L. Stein. He will display a collection of early photos and ephemera relating to pioneer transportation systems in Contra Costa County.

Society President A. Frank Bray will preside.

The meeting is called at 7:00 p.m. for no-host cocktails and 7:30 for dinner at the Concord Inn, 1601 Willow Pass Road, Concord. Members' guests and the public are cordially invited.

Reservations are required, to Secretary James B. Jory, P.O. Box 190, Martinez, CA 94554.

CONTRA COSTA WHEELS FROM CHOO-CHOO STEAM TO ELECTRIC SWOOSH

The first BART car, right, a boxy experimental unit, ran on the Diablo Test Track section of the new high-speed electrified rail line near Concord, in the 1960s. It was an engineering miracle compared to the iron horse of the narrow gauge California & Nevada RR, shown below at the Bryant Station, present site of the Orinda Theater. Bottom photo shows an earlier electric car of the Oakland, Antioch & Eastern RR (later Sacramento-Northern) stopping at Walnut Creek's station, Trinity and California Streets, about 1914.

SPEAKER

B. R. Stokes won't have far to come to address the Society's meeting April 25th. As Bay Area Rapid Transit District's top staff man, he works in BART's new Oakland headquarters and he resides in Orinda. He won't be able to ride one of the swift new trains to the meeting, because it predates BART's inaugural service to Concord by about a month.

His visit with us is timely. The central County area awaits the first passenger service with lively expectancy. It was just eight years ago this month that the first steel ribbons of BART tracks, called the Diablo Test Track, were placed in operation between Walnut Creek and Concord. Since then residents have watched the $1.4 billion project take shape in massive construction jobs east of the Caldecott Tunnel, and then witnessed the commencement of service between Hayward and Richmond.

Stokes has watched and guided the system's development almost from the very start. He joined the BART staff as Director of Information in 1958, was appointed assistant general manager 3 years later, then in 1963 was named general manager.

He is a member of the Department of Transportation's Urban Transportation Advisory Council, and is a vice president and director of the Institute for Rapid Transit, and a member of the executive committee of the Highway Research Board of the National Research Council.

Stokes graduated from the University of California at Berkeley. He is married and has four children.

Scene in 1914 at the Concord Station of Southern Pacific's San Ramon Branch. This roadway was built in 1891. Historic photos from Louis Stein Collection, others from BART.

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Officers

President ..... Justice A. F. Bray
First Vice President ..... Louis L. Stein
Second Vice President ..... Roy S. Bloss
Secretary ..... James B. Jory
Treasurer ..... George Harlow

Directors

Rev. William N. Abeloe ..... Lafayette
Roy S. Bloss ..... Alamo
Justice A. F. Bray ..... Martinez
Grant Burton ..... Pleasant Hill
Fern Davis ..... Walnut Creek
Robert R. Daugherty ..... Clayton
Ruth Galindo ..... Concord
George Harlow ..... Richmond
Bertha D. Hellum ..... Pleasant Hill
James B. Jory ..... Martinez
Dr. George A. Pettitt ..... Berkeley
Carol Leland ..... Orinda
Louis L. Stein ..... Berkeley
William Tornheim ..... Antioch

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

DINNER & MEETING

Speaker: B. R. Stokes,
General Manager
Bay Area Rapid Transit
District

Date: April 25, 1973

Place: Concord Inn
1601 Willow Pass Road
Concord, Calif.

Time: 7:00 p.m., no-host
cocktails;
7:30 p.m. dinner, $6.00

Reservations: To J. B. Jory, Sect'y
P.O. Box 190
Martinez, CA 94554

COME ONE! COME ALL!